

Owl Prowl through the Humbug Marsh's Forest of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge

Imagine walking down a trail quietly with 30 other people united with the hope of seeing or hearing an owl on the night breeze. It's hard to believe that this populated area where we live is also home to some of the most majestic wildlife, wildlife is all around us Downriver!

On Saturday November 8th we began the night with an introduction by Interpreter, Dorothy McLeer from the University of Michigan-Dearborn's Environmental Interpretive Center and Refuge Volunteer. Her interpretation of the natural history of owls set the mood for the adventure through the woods. This is the time of year to get owls to respond to calls as this is their mating season. The moon was bright enough that flashlights were not needed once our eyes adjusted to the dark. As we set off into the forest Dorothy gathered the group and called out to the Eastern Screech-Owl. She called with her own voice to the delight and amazement of the group. The call was like a waterfall of trills that cut through the silence. Throughout the evening Dorothy called the Eastern Screech-Owls and the Great Horned Owls. The Great Horned Owl has a very typical Hooo-hoo-hoo-hooo call.

This is one of the activities available to the public at Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. The refuge is usually closed to the public except for events like this. The Visitor Center is in the process of being built and once completed the trails surrounding the center will be open to the public daily from sunrise to sunset and the visitor center will be open for the public to enjoy during the day. Humbug Marsh and the Refuge Gateway will soon become a destination of choice in southeast Michigan.



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